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SUBJECT: DAILY SUMMARY OF JAPANESE PRESS 05/01/07

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ARTICLES:

(1) Prime Minister Abe offers oil storage to Saudi Arabia

ASAHI (Page 1) (Full)  
April 30, 2007

Riyadh, Naoto Maeda

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe met in Riyadh with Saudi Arabian King Abdullah on the evening of April 28 (early on April 29, Japan time). During the meeting, Abe proposed that Saudi Arabia use part of the government's oil storage tanks on Henza Island (in Uruma City, Okinawa Prefecture). Abdullah told Abe that Saudi Arabia would examine the proposal through consultations.

The oil storage proposal is aimed to deepen Japan's interdependence with Saudi Arabia, which is Japan's largest oil supplier, and ensure a stable oil supply. Saudi Arabia also would benefit from the arrangement since it will be possible for the country to transport oil to Asian countries in a couple of days.

The government is considering letting Saudi Arabia use part of the storage facilities on Henza Island linked to the mainland Okinawa by road. According to the government, of the stockpile for 90 days that the International Energy Agency requires of its members, 5.25 million kiloliters of oil, or an amount equivalent to 10 days of Japan's consumption, would be stored mainly on Henza Island.

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The Japanese government has noted that if Saudi Arabia stores oil in Japan for commercial use, that amount would be added to Japan's stockpile that the IEA requires. The government is determined that Japan is inescapably tied to Saudi Arabia in terms of energy security.

Since Okinawa is closely located to other East Asian countries, the Resources and Energy Agency said, "Saudi Arabia will be able to have a new storage facility from which it can transport oil in two to three days to the Asian region - it now takes 21 days. It will be possible to transport it to the West Coast of the United States in a week." So Tokyo has judged that both countries will benefit.

Attending the meeting includes also Fujio Miterai, chairman of the Japan Business Federation, which has sent a 180-member delegation accompanying Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, who is now on a tour of five Middle Eastern countries. After the meeting, Abe and Abdullah released a joint statement focusing on the setting up of joint taskforce of high-level officials from the government and private sector to promote investments by the two countries, as well as on the strengthening of political dialogue of senior officials.

(2) Japan-US foreign ministerial meeting: Aso, Rice agree "patience is not limitless" toward North Korea; If North does not carry out commitment, pressure will be applied

YOMIURI (Page 1) (Full)  
Eve., May 1, 2007

By Shuhei Kuromi in Washington

Foreign Minister Aso held an approximately 45 minute meeting with US Secretary of State Rice at the State Department on the evening of

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April 30 (morning of May 1, Japan time). The two agreed that if North Korea does not carry out "first stage measures," such as shutting down its nuclear facility at Yongbyon, as promised in February at the six-party talks, "our patience is not limitless, and we should the heighten pressure is need be."

In that respect, the foreign minister after the meeting told the press corps: "There was talk between Prime Minister Abe (and President Bush) that if an answer (from North Korea) is not forthcoming at all in several days, additional sanctions might be taken." He revealed that additional sanctions were being considered toward North Korea.

The secretary in the meeting confirmed the position that on the issue of removing North Korea from the list of terrorist-supporting countries, consideration would be given to the Japanese abduction issue. Foreign Minister Aso transmitted his government's plan to expand "several fold" assistance to Pakistan over the 200 million dollars provided during the last fiscal year in order to rebuild the border area between Pakistan and Afghanistan, which is considered a hot-house for terrorist organizations.

### (3) Gist of Japan-US foreign ministerial meeting

MAINICHI (Page 2) (Full)  
Eve., May 1, 2007

The following is a gist of the meeting between Foreign Minister Aso and US Secretary of State Rice that occurred on April 30:

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#### North Korea problem

Both officials: North Korea must implement the first stage of measures as quickly as possible. Our patience is not limitless. If need be, we would then heighten pressure.

Foreign Minister Aso: I would like to confirm the words that President Bush told Prime Minister Abe that in removing North Korea from the list of terrorist-supporting states, consideration would be given to the abduction issue.

Secretary Rice: I confirm that he said that.

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#### Climate change

Both officials: (This part of the (joint statement of the Japan-US summit meeting was a important result, and it must be followed up.

#### War on terror

Foreign Minister Aso: We will greatly increase assistance to Pakistan, which is on the frontline in the war on terror.

Both officials: It is a common challenge that the US and Japan must cooperate on.

#### China

Foreign Minister Aso: The visit to Japan of Premier Wen was successful. We now would like to further improve Japan-China relations. We will work on China to play an even more constructive role in the international community.

(Takuzo Tanaka in Washington)

(4) Meeting of Japanese, US defense chiefs: Revision of Futenma relocation plan will not be allowed; US side asks for intelligence protection

YOMIURI (Page 1) (Full)  
Eve., May 1, 2007

Yoshifumi Sugita in Washington

In his meeting with Japan's defense minister on the morning of April 30 (Late evening in Japan), Secretary of Defense Gates made this statement about the issue of relocation the US Marine Corps' Futenma Air Station (Ginowan City in Okinawa): "It is important that we not

change even one part of last year's roadmap (for implementing US force realignment, as agreed to by the US and Japanese governments). We must implement it as is." He sought to check the moves of local governments that seek a revision of the Japan-US agreement to construct a V-shaped runway on the coastline of Camp Schwab (Nago City, same prefecture), the site for the relocation.

In response, Defense Minister Kyuma stated: "In accordance with the agreement with the US, we will implement the relocation and reversion as quickly as possible, while obtaining the understanding of the local communities."

The Defense Secretary, turning to the incident in which a Maritime Self-Defense Force seamen took out secret data on the Aegis vessel, pointed out: "The protection of secrets is not just a challenge for

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the Defense Ministry, it is something that the entire Japanese government must tackle. It is not just the Aegis: in addition to going ahead with US-Japanese cooperation on the next-generation mainstay fighter and missile defense (MD), the key also is to discuss the finer subtleties of intelligence." He strongly urged the Japanese government to strengthen its system for protecting secrets. The defense minister apologized for having caused concerns.

On the other hand, the defense minister asked for information to be provided on such aspects of the F-22 Raptor as its capabilities and equipment. The F-22 is the US forces' most recent Stealth aircraft, which has become subject to testing as the next generation mainstay jet aircraft of choice. Secretary Gates said, "We are prohibited by law from sales of the F-22, but he added, "From the standpoint of roles and mission capabilities of the US and Japan, it is worth considering." He suggested that the idea would be considered. The US Air Force has temporarily deployed F-22s to Kadena Air Base in Okinawa, and on April 27, the aircraft carried out joint drills with Air Self-Defense Force aircraft.

(5) Uranium diplomacy makes major achievement: Memorandum with Kazakhstan; Japan secures supply more than half the amount it imports a year

YOMIURI (Page 9) (Full)  
May 1, 2007

Astana, Kazakhstan, Chiaki Toyoda

The visit to Kazakhstan by a joint delegation of Japanese government officials and private companies resulted in 24 memos on Apr. 30, which is a major achievement in terms of energy security. In particular, it is significant that the delegation was able to secure uranium more than half the amount Japan imports a year. Close cooperation between government and the private sector will become the key to smooth fulfillment of the contracts. Private companies, such as Tokyo Electric Power Co. Itochu Corp. and Marubeni Corp. have exchanged five memos for development of uranium mines and 10 memos for the purchases of uranium with Kazatomprom, a national atomic company, and other companies.

Long-term import contracts for uranium imports come to 1,600 tons a year. In addition, Japan has obtained the right to secure 3,000 tons of uranium a year through the securing of stake in development of uranium concentrate. Since there appears to be no need to import all of 4,600 tons, chances are that trading companies will sell surplus uranium to foreign countries.

Japan's nuclear power generation accounts for 31% of its total electric power generation. The international price of uranium for fuel use went up in April this year 16 times the level of the end of 2000. This is attributable to a sharp increase in demand for energy in China and India. Strengthening ties with Kazakhstan, whose uranium reserves rank second in the world, is a step forward for Japan to secure stable supply of uranium supplies.

Economy, Trade and Industry Minister Amari on Apr. 30 stated, "We can expect that imports of uranium from Kazakhstan will rise from the current 1% to 30% -40%." Akira Yokota, vice president of Itochu

Corp., who signed a memo in Kazakhstan highly praised the government effort noting, "We can do business with Kazakhstan with security, as there was backing from the government."

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It will be necessary for the government to consolidate rules for smooth fulfillment of contracts and a framework for monitoring such a process.

Japanese companies had no choice but to substantively curtail its stake in the Sakhalin 2 project, a Russian project to develop crude oil and natural gas in Russia. In order not to make the same mistake, Nippon Export and Import Insurance, an independent administrative agency, signed a memo to simplify loan insurance policy Japan will take out when they obtain stake in Kazakhstan. This will provide the Japanese government grounds for intervening in the event of the Kazakhstan refusing to fulfill contracts, citing the possibility of the state-run insurance agency suffering from damage.

The government also intends to look into the possibility of the governments of both countries establishing a point of contact for settling possible disputes between their respective companies.

The Foreign Ministry yesterday released that it decided to launch talks with Kazakhstan to sign a nuclear power agreement. Kazakhstan is strongly urging Japan to transfer its advanced nuclear-related technology to it. Such an agreement will eliminate the need to obtain a commitment from Kazakhstan not to proliferate the nuclear-related technology transferred by Japan each time such a transfer takes place.

(6) DPJ's Edano issues anti-Ozawa statement on lack of constitutional debate since he became party head

YOMIURI (Page 4) (Excerpts)  
April 29, 2007

On April 28, at a special forum of the Yomiuri International Conference to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the promulgation of the Constitution, Yukio Edano of the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ or Minshuto), who chairs the party's Constitutional Research Council, commented on the party's inability to reach a revised agreement with the ruling parties on the national referendum bill to set procedures for amending the Constitution. He severely criticized party head Ichiro Ozawa, saying, "The responsibility lies in Prime Minister Abe and President Ozawa."

Edano had in mind the revision talks that were promoted by Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) Lower House Constitutional Research Special Committee Director Funada and others, but which were thrown aside at the last stage. His comment was filled with chagrin: "Persons who had not listened to the debate on the floor of both sides (the LDP and DPJ) made uncalled for remarks. I am not only referring to those on the other side (LDP). Since the two major parties will fight for control of the government, the approaches of the LDP president and the DPJ president and others are that they must place top priority on winning the next election. Such persons cannot form an agreement since the Constitution is connected."

Moreover, he stressed: "As long as the pattern of Prime Minister Abe versus President Ozawa continues, it is inevitable that the situation will continue of (not being able to amend the Constitution). If we quickly change the party heads, I expect the condition will exist of our being able to have proper debate on the Constitution, together with Funada and the others."

He continued: "Cabinet ministers, and politicians who aim to become

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party heads, as well as politicians who engage in fishy business should have nothing to do with the Constitution. I think I will separate myself from constitutional work for awhile."

On the other hand, regarding Prime Minister Abe's making constitutional revision a campaign issue in this summer's Lower House election, Edano was critical, saying: "His statement making constitutional reform a campaign issue in the summer election was a nuisance. If it becomes an issue in the election campaign, we will have to stress our differences (on constitutional issues). That is why we will not be able to work with the LDP (on amending the Constitution)."

(7) Tomita memorandum commission issues verification report reconfirming Showa Emperor's dissatisfaction with enshrinement of Class-A war criminals, and citing it as first class documentation of Showa Period history

NIHON KEIZAI (Page 1) (Excerpts)  
May 1, 2007

The Tomita memorandum research committee is a panel of outside experts set up last year by the Nihon Keizai Shimbunsha to look into the Tomita memos (diary and notebooks) that were left behind by the late Asahiko Tomita, former Grand Chamberlain in the Imperial Household Agency. The committee issued its final report on April 30. The committee starting last October met a total of 11 times to verify the authenticity of the entire collection of memos. As a result, the panel has given the collection high marks, stating: "These are valuable documents for research into the history of the Showa Period, being one of a few written records from a top official of the Imperial Household Agency whose point of view is different from the released documents of lesser officials, such as their diaries, of which there have been a relatively large number until now."

In particular, with respect to the statement of displeasure by the Emperor of the enshrinement of Class-A war criminals, as reported by this newspaper last July, the report reached the conclusion: "Even comparing this to other materials and records, the factual material matches, so there can be no other conclusion reached except that the Emperor was displeased."

(8) Editorial: Collective defense-Panel's conclusion preordained

ASAHI (Page 3) (Full)  
April 27, 2007

This is a race in which the winner has been decided on before the start.

Prime Minister Abe has set up an advisory panel to study the right of collective self-defense. The panel is called the "Council for Rebuilding the Legal Foundation of Security." Its 13 members are all alike in their positive views about allowing Japan to exercise the right of collective self-defense.

The panel is expected to come up with a report in the fall of this year. We can see the report's wording that stands for exercising the right to collective self-defense.

The prime minister has advocated breaking away from Japan's postwar regime. For him, the government's constitutional

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interpretation-which has prohibited Japan from participating in collective self-defense-is probably one of the nation's "taboos to be broken away from," as well as the Constitution and the Basic Education Law before its amendment.

Prime Minister Abe, in his book published three years ago, held a dialogue with one of the panel's members, Hisahiko Okazaki, former ambassador to Thailand.

Abe: "A military alliance is a blood alliance. If Japan comes under attack from a foreign enemy, America's young people will shed blood. However, if we interpret the Constitution as we do now, Japan's Self-Defense Forces will not shed blood when America is attacked."

Okazaki: "The court didn't decide to interpret that way. That's not written in the Constitution, either. Simply, that's just what government bureaucrats said. So the prime minister has only to say in the Diet, 'Japan has the right, so Japan can do so.'"

Among others on the panel, there are also some people who have made similar remarks. In 2001, for example, Kyoto University Professor Hiroshi Nakanishi was summoned to a hearing of the House of Councillors Research Committee on International Affairs. Nakanishi stated before the committee: "The government has been taking the position that Japan will not exercise the right to collective self-defense. This is based on the government's way of reading and interpreting the Constitution. In the eyes of foreign countries, Japan appears selfish. They may think Japan will not commit itself to any critical security issues while shrinking from danger and that Japan is only looking after its economic interests."

Indeed, there is also such a view. However, Japan is vested with the right of collective self-defense but is constitutionally not allowed to exercise the right. This has been the government's consistent view. Many experts also embrace it.

However, the panel is just a gathering of specific-minded people. It will wrap up its discussions in only several months to alter the government's interpretation. Such an overbearing and one-sided way of doing things cannot be allowed.

Upon screening and selecting members for the panel, the prime minister is said to have referred to an advisory panel that was set up for the Nakasone cabinet and paved the way for Prime Minister Nakasone at the time to pay homage at Yasukuni Shrine.

On that panel, however, was Takeshi Umehara, a philosopher, and some other scholars who were opposed to or cautious about the prime minister's Yasukuni homage. In the end, the panel worked out a report describing minority views as well. Umehara later recalled: "There were opinions from comparatively many people against it. One-third of that panel's members were negative. I think its members were selected in a very fair way."

All the more because the problem is difficult, the prime minister should listen to the various opinions of experts so as not to err in his judgment. That is the very purpose of advisors to the leader of a country.

The panel set up this time makes no sense. The prime minister should immediately think twice about his picks for the panel.

Is the prime minister otherwise saying those disagreeing with him

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have no knowledge and he will not recognize them as knowledgeable persons?

#### (9) TOP HEADLINES

Asahi:

National Police Agency to offer rewards up to 3 million yen for information on suspects in heinous crimes

Mainichi, Yomiuri & Sankei:

In poll, 70% see it necessary to review law that assumes baby born within 300 days after divorce as belonging to former husband

Nihon Keizai:

Hitachi, Denso to offer auto repair services, given increasing computer-controlled parts

Tokyo Shimbun:

System to watch for abnormal behavior installed for first time in front of JR Kashiwa Station

Akahata:

LDP in process of forming timetable for constitutional revision

#### (10) EDITORIALS

Asahi:

(1) 20th anniversary of assault on Asahi Shimbun Hanshin branch office: Press never gives way to terrorism

Mainichi:

(1) Lake Toya Summit: Discuss environmental issue on vast stage of nature  
(2) Party leaders should hold debate early to demonstrate capabilities

Yomiuri:

(1) Don't allow high technologies to flow out, but don't hinder foreign direct investment  
(2) Don't forget what purpose biofuel is used for

Nihon Keizai:

(1) Make use of M&As: Both offensive, defensive forces should ask for views from shareholders

Sankei:

(1) Swiftly resolve difficult tasks and set up medical incident study group  
(2) Revised child-abuse prevention legislation is "lifeline" for infants

Tokyo Shimbun:

(1) What we can learn from Iraq war 60 years after enactment of Constitution

Akahata:

(1) 78th May Day: Let's protect our livelihood and Constitution by presenting common demands

(11) Prime Minister's schedule, April 26 & 27

NIHON KEIZAI (Page 2) (Full)

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April 28, 2007

April 26

Noon

Met at US Congress with House Speaker Pelosi and other officials.

Afternoon

Visited US soldiers wounded in Iraq. Offered flowers at Arlington National Cemetery. Arrived at Blair House.

Evening

Attended dinner party hosted by President Bush and his wife. Stayed at Blair House.

April 27

Morning

Summit with Bush at Camp David. Held joint press meeting with Bush.

Prime Minister's schedule, April 27 & 28

NIHON KEIZAI (Page 2) (Full)

April 29, 2007

April 27

Noon

Had lunch with President Bush at Camp David.

Afternoon

Visited National Memorial for Japanese-Americans. Held informal meeting with former JET program members at Japanese Embassy in Washington, along with his wife Akie.



Evening  
Left Andrews Air Force Base on government plane.

April 28

Morning  
Arrived at Saudi Arabian Air Force Base in Riyadh. Attended welcoming ceremony. Attended banquet hosted by Crown Prince Sultan. Arrived at Guest House.

Evening  
Attended Japan-Saudi Arabia economic seminar. Held informal meeting at the official residence of the Japanese Ambassador with Japanese business leaders. Returned to Guest House.

Prime Minister's schedule, April 28 & 29

NIHON KEIZAI (Page 2) (Full)

April 30, 2007

April 28

Evening  
Attended banquet hosted by King Abdullah at King's Palace in Riyadh. Arrived at Guest House and stayed there.

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April 29

Morning  
Departed from Riyadh Air Force Base on government plane. Arrived at Abu Dhabi International Airport. Attended welcoming ceremony. Visited the late President Zayid's grave.

Afternoon  
Met with EAU President Khalifa. Attended luncheon hosted by the president. Encouraged MSDF personnel. Attended economic seminar at Emirates Palace Hotel.

Evening  
Met with Crown Prince Mohammed. Attended banquet hosted by the crown prince.

Prime Minister's schedule, April 29 & 30

NIHON KEIZAI (Page 2) (Full)

May 1, 2007

April 29

Evening  
Stayed at Emirates Palace Hotel in Abu Dhabi.

April 30

Morning  
Visited Japanese school in Abu Dhabi. Left Bateen Airport by helicopter. Arrived at heliport of Zaabil Club. Met at Zaabil Palace with Prime Minister Mohammed.

Afternoon  
Attended luncheon hosted by Mohammed at Burj al-Arab Hotel. Left heliport at Dubai Police Academy. Arrived at Abu Dhabi International Airport. Departed the airport on government plane. Arrived at Kuwait International Airport. Attended welcoming ceremony.

Evening  
Met with Kuwaiti Emir Sabah at his private residence.

DONOVAN